



19601 North 27th Avenue • Phoenix, Arizona 85027 • (623) 580-6100

June 11, 2014

Dear Customer:

We want to provide you with the following important pet information about the parakeet you recently purchased from PetSmart.

We have learned of several confirmed cases of Psittacosis, a bacterial infection, diagnosed in some of the birds sold in our stores. Because the parakeet you purchased came from the same source (though **not** from the same store), out of an abundance of caution for your safety and that of your pet, we want to provide you the following information:

What is Psittacosis?

- Psittacosis is a bacterial disease (known also as *Chlamydia psittaci*) that can be carried by birds.
- In rare cases, *Chlamydia psittaci* excreted in the bird's droppings may be transmitted to humans who are in close contact with the bird or its cage.
- Birds with Psittacosis may appear to be drowsy or depressed. They may eat poorly and have runny eyes and noses. They may also sneeze, cough, have ruffled feathers, or shiver. The bird's droppings will often be watery.
- Humans who become ill with Psittacosis may develop cold or flu-like symptoms, similar to a respiratory illness, usually within one to two weeks after exposure to an infected bird.

Please know that we take precautions to keep our birds healthy and we monitor for these types of infections. Cases of Psittacosis are rare, and when promptly diagnosed and properly treated, one can expect to make a full and complete recovery.

What Options Are Available To Me?

If your bird shows signs of illness or if you are concerned about its health, you can schedule an appointment for your pet at a local Banfield Pet Hospital (located within certain PetSmart stores) or see your local avian veterinarian for an examination and Psittacosis testing. To find your closest Banfield facility, visit <http://www.banfield.com/our-hospitals>. Give your veterinarian this letter and the attached testing form from the University of Georgia so they can take appropriate action. PetSmart will cover the cost of testing and/or treatment if warranted. Alternatively, you may also return your bird to any PetSmart store for a full refund.

What About My Family's Health?

If you or your family members believe you are experiencing symptoms as described above, visit your health care provider **immediately** and show your provider this letter so they can take the appropriate action. PetSmart will pay for the cost of the testing and for any follow up treatment if you or your family members test positive for Psittacosis.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause to you or your family. PetSmart's main concern is the health and safety of our Pet Parents and their pets. If we can be of any additional help, or if you have questions, please call 855-732-8218 between 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. CST.

Information for Your Veterinarian

We will ask you to submit Psittacosis testing (PCR) under our Petsmart account to University of GA Infectious Disease Laboratory. Attached is the submission form. Veterinarians should collect on one swab samples from the conjunctiva, choana and vent, in that order. The swab must then be placed in a sterile container without gel and be labeled. The attached form should be completed with the Pet Parent and clinic information and mailed with the sample to the UGA IDL address listed on the form.

PetSmart will be billed directly for the testing, and the local store can be billed for the examination, sample collection and shipping. Results will be sent to Petsmart's corporate office for follow up.

Sincerely,

Kemba Marshall, DVM DABVP
Director of Merchandising Pet Quality and Education
PetSmart

Enclosure